

**White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation  
Day 2 Breakout Session Compilation**

**Topic:** Reaching Across Boundaries to Promote Shared Governance

**Session number:** 51

**Afternoon**

**Facilitator:** Lucy Moore

**Location:** 221

*This summary cannot be more than two pages; allocate space as needed among the categories.*

**A. Major Repeated Themes Raised in the Discussion.** *A grouping of ideas repeated with some frequency in the session and brought up again during the group summation process. Also includes diverging views and/or questions about the topic.*

- Much confusion over what “shared governance” means: is it a shared vision or shared governing? Group uncomfortable with this term, even as defined—challenged the notion of “shared governance” as a tool for cooperative conservation. Prefer thinking in terms of partnership, collaboration, or shared vision.
- Challenge to recognize/respect authorities and share resources.
- Legitimacy/credibility of process: need for clarity of public’s role...has the decision already been made?
- Need for a common vision for resource management goals.
- Do not let the money chase blind you to the long term goal of gaining trust
- Less money means need to focus on core functions, need high level decisions on priorities.
- Tribes have not traditionally been included in process and need capacity building.

**B. National-level Practical Actions** *that could be taken by the Federal government, national NGO’s, and other national organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Support for a good map (data, GIS, local knowledge)
- Embed priorities for cooperative conservation in the authorization process
- Focus on shared goals throughout all organizational levels
- Challenge the notion of “shared governance” as a tool for cooperative conservation (private landowners and tribes do not want to be told what to do)
- Development of performance expectations/measures for federal agencies to measure success in collaboration and change cultures and behaviors
- Feds need to look across state boundaries and engage states in ecosystem issue
- Be up front and be clear about their authority to deliver.
- Broaden view of “conservation” to a holistic view.
- Educate federal staff on cultural and religious differences.

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C. **Local-level Practical Actions** *that could be taken at the local or community level by Tribes, state and local communities, private citizens, and local organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Need training in how to measure success in performance
- Encourage local entities to be “cooperating agencies” for processes like NEPA
- Hold yourself and the national government/organizations accountable to deliver on their promises
- Early communication in the life of a project with all levels of partners
- Share local resources (money) with national agencies
- When developing a plan (MOU), draw a contract with a NGO to avoid turnover problem
- Support for a good map (data, GIS, local knowledge)
- Educate federal staff on cultural and religious differences.

D. **Particularly insightful quotes from participants** *that capture the essence of key points made during the group’s discussion.*

- “consensus is the absent of leadership”
- “If you come up with a plan that everyone can deal with, ‘governance’ ultimately takes care of itself.”
- “it’s all about relationships”
- “we cannot do more with less anymore, we’re going to do less with less”

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**Facilitator:** Pat Tallarico

**Location:** 222

**A. Major Repeated Themes Raised in the Discussion.** *A grouping of ideas repeated with some frequency in the session and brought up again during the group summation process. Also includes diverging views and/or questions about the topic.*

- Shared governance initiatives should be results oriented rather than process focused.
- Within federal agencies needs to be new expectations and capacity building to ensure success for shared governance. Leadership can come at any level and especially must come from the top.
- Federal agencies should develop flexible policies that encourage local collaborations and innovation.
- Needs to be balance between regulatory incentives and reward-based incentives.
- Agencies should have similar set of authorities to encourage shared governance.
- Capacity for shared governance should be built at the local level.
- Encourage the use of flexible time to allow for agency staff and local organizations to attend meetings.

**B. National-level Practical Actions** *that could be taken by the Federal government, national NGO's, and other national organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Ensure that national level objectives are met while allowing for flexibility at the local level.
- Change agency culture and language to help eliminate barriers to real participation to ensure that people are seen as part of government.
- Evaluate current programs and projects before determining new initiatives.
- Change agency planning practices and regulations to incorporate community involvement.
- Change FACA requirements to encourage broader community involvement.
- Empower federal agencies to be a more active in local communities with less centralized management.
- Provide incentives and build capacity for federal staff to engage in shared governance initiatives. Risk taking should be encouraged.
- Develop “pilot” or demonstration projects that allow for innovation and use this to lessen risk.

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- Grants and other funding should be designed to encourage shared governance.
- Realize that early on deliverables might not be tangible but they are important steps toward achieving desired outcomes, eg relationship building, convening partner meetings, etc.

**C. Local-level Practical Actions** *that could be taken at the local or community level by Tribes, state and local communities, private citizens, and local organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Utilize the IPA programs to facilitate greater understanding among the various levels of the partnership.
- Local stakeholders need to be more aware of national interests.
- Build bridges between groups with divergent issues or perspectives.
- Local communities invest in visioning process then make planning decisions.
- Federal agencies need to behave in a manner that encourages good relationships with local organizations and governmental entities.
- With shared governance comes shared burdens and responsibilities.
- Communities need to invest in education young people about priority and natural resource issues.
- Communities promote understanding of different perspectives among local citizenry.

**D. Particularly insightful quotes from participants** *that capture the essence of key points made during the group's discussion.*

- Shared governance means the sum is greater than the parts.
- Shared governance means you own it.
- Common vision will change perspectives.
- Change begins by changed expectations.
- Hire for attitude, change for skill.

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**Afternoon**

**Facilitator:** Marlon Sherman

**Location:** 223

**A. Major Repeated Themes Raised in the Discussion.** *A grouping of ideas repeated with some frequency in the session and brought up again during the group summation process. Also includes diverging views and/or questions about the topic.*

- How can tomorrow's governance be better if current efforts fall short?
  - May be issue of priorities?
  - Need commitment from agencies to step forward/accountability
  - Increased citizen involvement
- Shared governance: more of an ecosystem approach to conservation.
- Impediments to SG can occur at local levels.... Lack of trust
- Education process is the key to encourage SG.
- Seek common definitions (and databases) for conservation issues.
- Understanding roles of each agency/participant important to SG.
- SG may begin with/focus on easier aspects of an issue – from there partnerships may grow and expand to new challenges.
- Entities must share costs and benefits for conservation success.
- Identify issues/needs locally and then seek appropriate partners.
  - Recognizing that benefits may be clear to some, with others not seeing the same thing.
- Incentives: “if you succeed, fine, but if you fail, you’re finished” – We need risk takers and how do we create incentives for risk taking that is sometimes necessary for conservation success?
- Success relies on relationships.
- Lack of continuity of staff at all levels can disrupt/distract from SG.
- Communities need to create a vision: then expectations follow. Members need to ask: “What do I want and what am I willing to do?”
- What does it take for Conservation to really occur (on the ground)? We need to focus on people that are on or work on the landscape.
- We need to look for nexus that provides on-the-ground coordination and delivery of conservation products.
- Seek one stop shopping opportunities for citizens looking for govt services.
- We need watershed type forums, much like we have with species specific venues, like the flyway councils. Identify catalysts that bring parties together and outside of statutory mandates.
- SG should anticipate need for maintenance.
- As progress will not occur overnight, we need to seek venues to report on progress, or lack of progress, as well as barriers, and initial successes.

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- As for accountability, federal agencies and other participants that participate with SG must be accountable.
- It will take time to develop trust.... This will lead to committed participants and easily shared information.

**B. National-level Practical Actions** *that could be taken by the Federal government, national NGO's, and other national organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Seek ways to encourage risk taking at federal agency level.
- Establish policy supporting SG, perhaps via an ecosystem approach.
- Reemphasize agreed upon/consistent ecological zones and watersheds for federal level efforts to encourage shared governance.
- Ensure grass roots funding.
- Need consistency within and between federal agencies.
- Create model for encouraging cooperative conservation at the local level.
- Recognition from those controlling the purse strings that funding for relationship building and development can achieve greater conservation results than project dollars.

**C. Local-level Practical Actions** *that could be taken at the local or community level by Tribes, state and local communities, private citizens, and local organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Create expectations – bring various interests together to begin process of collaborative conservation.
- Provide range of incentives to encourage cooperative process. This can be as simple as having assurance of a place at the table. Or it can be a simple recognition that the law can provide the incentive.
- Establish shared/streamlined permitting.
- Create forums for watershed level work, similar to what we have for species.
- Encourage citizen/community led initiatives that create incentives for conservation – make the job of agencies easier.

**D. Particularly insightful quotes from participants** that capture the essence of key points made during the group's discussion.

“Conservation does not happen in the office – it happens on the ground.”

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**Facilitator:** James Moye

**Location:** 224

**A. Major Repeated Themes Raised in the Discussion.** *A grouping of ideas repeated with some frequency in the session and brought up again during the group summation process. Also includes diverging views and/or questions about the topic.*

- A national program
- Communication, cooperation, coordination VS. confrontation and competition.
- Leadership, metrics accountability
- Data transferability.
- Cooperative conservation must become a permanent element in all of our government and communities goals and decisions.
- Leadership must sustain its commitment to cooperative conservation.
- The shared governance means sharing power and sharing responsibility.
- Leadership must sustain that the shared governance means sharing power and sharing responsibility.

**B. National-level Practical Actions** *that could be taken by the Federal government, national NGO's, and other national organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Commitment from agency heads on down to participate.
- There has to be mutual benefits. You can't try and get me there to do your work, you have to have the agreement that if both of us weren't there at the table, collaborating then the project wouldn't be taking off.
- Seek authorities for multi-year appropriations and spending on projects. You could develop a strategic plan and partnership for purpose. Maybe at a state or regional level.
- You have to have a process to get to the local level. There needs to be a national PLAN so that you could implement it at the local level.
- Sharing results, like this but perhaps on a regional level. What works what doesn't. Sharing with other federal agencies, with everyone who wishes to listen.
- There are national laws and regulations that are kind of one size fits all without any ability to vary that locally.

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**C. Local-level Practical Actions** *that could be taken at the local or community level by Tribes, state and local communities, private citizens, and local organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

- Mentor program for new employees from the old in every kind of partnerships.
- Build up existing partnerships. Build up intercommunity relationships.
- Utilize natural models for our attempts at shared governance similar to how the ecosystem does-don't divide its functions amongst soil, water, wildlife, etc. Evaluate the ecosystem and not just the individual resources.
- Delegate and provide resources for field days in the interest of developing partnerships.
- Learn each others languages. Communities learn techno-speak and agencies need to learn to listen to stories.
- Have a decision-making process more suited to the collaborative environment.
- For anything to be successful then we must start at the kindergarten level with environmental education.

**D. Particularly insightful quotes from participants** *that capture the essence of key points made during the group's discussion.*

- For anything to be successful then we must start at the kindergarten level with environmental education.
- Getting sustainable resources requires sustainable representatives.
- The landscape is slower to respond than the politicians.
- The problem solving approaches for the past 20 years are different than the ones for the future will be. It is a way to dissolve some barriers of the culture. There are no incentives for motivators or no thinking outside the box. The approach isn't as proactive as it needs to be as well.

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